

5837



A  
S E R M O N,

PREACH'D at the

*Consecration of St. MART's  
Church, in Manchester,*

On Wednesday, September 29, 1756.



MANCHESTER

S. F. R. M. O. N.

Printed at the

Consecrated Church, Manchester.



On Wednesday, September 27, 1844.

MANCHESTER

The ANTIQUITY and IMPORTANCE of PUBLIC  
WORSHIP considered.

---

A  
S E R M O N,  
PREACH'D at the  
C O N S E C R A T I O N  
O F  
*St. Mary's Church,*  
I N  
*M A N C H E S T E R,*  
O N  
WEDNESDAY, Sept. 29, 1756.

---

By THOMAS FOXLEY, M. A. K.  
RECTOR of the said CHURCH, and FELLOW of CHRIST-  
COLLEGE in MANCHESTER.

---

---

MANCHESTER:

Printed by Jos. HARROP, opposite the *Clock End* of the *Exchange*,  
For Messrs. NEWTON, Booksellers. Price Six-pence.

5-91



The Antiquity and Importance of British  
Wealth considered.

A  
SERMON

Preached at the  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH OF

St. Mary's Church,



MANCHESTER.

Wednesday, Sept. 29. 1796.


By THOMAS FOXLEY, M.A.  
Rector of the said Church, and Fellow of Christ  
Church in Manchester.

MANCHESTER.  
Printed by Jas. Harwood, opposite the Clock face of the Exchange.  
For M<sup>rs</sup>. Norton, Bookseller. Price 6s. 6d.





# THE P R E F A C E.

S the Publication of a Sermon by *me* upon a Subject, which hath already furnished the World with so many excellent ones from *Persons of the greatest Learning and Abilities*, may seem to carry the Appearance of Vanity and Self-conceit, I must in Justice to myself declare, that I disclaim all Pretence to Merit in it as a Writer, and only appear in Print, to comply with the Request of some of my Hearers, who were pleased to think well of the Discourse, and desired to have it. I must own indeed, I was the more willing to yield to the Solicitation, as I thought, that however imperfect the Performance, it might yet be of some Use in a Place, which hath not for many Years afforded the Inhabitants an Opportunity of hearing a Discourse on this Subject; and as it also seem'd a proper Occasion

caſion of making ſome Obſervations on the Nature of public Worſhip, and offering ſome neceſſary Cautions againſt the Abufe of it, which the Circumſtances of the World *in general*, and this Place *in particular* ſeem'd to require.

THESE were my real Motives to publiſh; and all that I can ſay for myſelf is, that I mean well;—and as I affect no Praise, I flatter myſelf that I ſhall incur no Censure; and that whatever Faults may be found in the *Execution*, will by good-natur'd Readers be pardoned, for the Sake of the *Intention*.





GEN. iv. 26. latter Part,

— Then began Men to call upon  
the Name of the LORD.

THESE Words, at the first Sight, seem to imply, that there was no Worship or *Calling upon the Name of the Lord* before this Time. But when, we read in the preceding Chapters, that *God blessed the Seventh Day and sanctified it*; and that, *in process of Time, Cain and Abel brought their Offerings unto the Lord*; it is highly probable, that there was both a peculiar *Time* and *Place* set Apart for religious Worship: So that we must look for some other meaning of the Passage under Consideration.

Now among the various Constructions, which have been put upon it, there is none, I think, more



approved and better supported, than this.—That in the Days of *Enos*, good Men being awakened by a Sense of their Wretchedness and Infirmary *began then*, not for the first Time to *call upon God*, but to call upon him in a more *public* and *conspicuous* Manner; by forming themselves into distinct Societies, and uniting together for the better Prosecution and Improvement of Religion.

THIS was a laudable Practice, and well-pleasing to God: As is very evident from the remarkable Care, which he took to preserve it Pure and Incorrupt; when it was in Danger of being lost in Idolatry and Superstition. For with this view God *called Abraham*, who went forth with his Family, \* *not knowing*, as the Apostle speaks, *whither he went*. His Duty however he well knew; and therefore we read of his building an *Altar*, more than once, as he travelled, and *calling upon the Name of the Lord*. After his Death, we find the like Provision made for public Worship by *Isaac* and *Jacob*; and as *Jacob* was commanded by God to *build an Altar*; † it is reasonable to think, that his Predecessors did the same, in Compliance with some positive Injunction.

BUT

\* Gen. xii. 4.

† Gen. xxxv. 1.

BUT whether that was the Case or not, when God had multiplied the Seed of *Abraham* and brought them out of *Egypt*, he expressly required, not barely an *Altar*, but a *Tabernacle* to be built, according to the *Pattern*, which he would shew them\*. This, being a portable Fabric, was to move, as they moved in their Way to *Canaan*, and to be appropriated for the Celebration of public Worship.

WHAT particular Reasons God might have for requiring this Tabernacle, is more than we shall take upon us positively to determine. As it was called the Tabernacle of the *Congregation*, or rather of *Meeting*, as a sagacious Critic observes †, because God had engaged there to meet ‡ and to bless his People—it might tend to confine their Worship to that one Being, from whom alone they expected Assistance.

UPON their Settlement in the Land of *Canaan*, this Tabernacle was laid up (probably to prevent any superstitious and idolatrous Use being made of it,) in the *Temple*, § which Solomon had erected by divine Appointment. And as this magnificent Structure was to answer all the Purposes of the Tabernacle; God promised the Continuance of his

B 2

especial

---

\* Exod. xxv. 8 and 9. † Mr. Mede. ‡ Exod. xxix. 42.  
§ 1 Kings viii. 4.

especial Favour, upon the Prayer put up by the King at the Dedication of it. \* And tho' he suffered it to be destroyed for the Sins of the People, and the People themselves to be carried Captive to *Babylon*; yet upon their Return, it pleased God, who would still have a Place for public Worship, to stir up the Spirit of *Zerubbabel*, and the Spirit of all the Remnant of the People to build him a second Temple.†

BUT this was not the only Place, erected for public Worship. It was indeed the most solemn and public one, and the Ceremonial Worship was confined to it—hither likewise all the Males were to repair thrice in the Year; and to cut off the most plausible Pretence for staying at Home, they had God's Word for the Security of the Land, during their Absence.‡ But besides the *Temple*, there were *lesser* Places of public Worship, where the People constantly assembled to join in Set Forms of Prayer, and to hear the Scriptures read and expounded. These were called *Synagogues*, not perhaps of any other, than *human* Invention; yet they are not without

---

\* This Prayer, says Lord Orrery in his Observations upon *Pliny's* 1st Ep. Book 4. is one of the noblest Pieces of Poetry, that even Inspiration itself has ever communicated to Mankind. It is at once the strongest Example of the *Pathetic*, and the *Sublime*, that can be produced in any other Author, sacred or profane.

† Haggai i. 14. ‡ Exod. xxxiv. 24.



out their Commendation in the Gospel. \* And we cannot doubt of the acceptableness of the Service therein performed; because our blessed Lord *customarily* join'd in this Service on the Sabbath-day, — nay he *ever*, that is, at the usual Times of Prayer, *taught in the Synagogue, whither the Jews always resort.*

FROM this short Account of public Worship, even from the most early Times, and of the divine Care to keep up and encourage a *due* Performance of it; we may infer the great Piety and Utility of building *Churches*, altho' there be no explicit Command in Scripture for it, as there was for the *Takernacle* and the *Temple*. For public Worship is, neither a mere *Patriarchal*, nor a *legal* Duty, but a *natural* one; equally obligatory under the Gospel, as well as under the Law and before it. And agreeable hereto you find the Apostles, after our Lord's Ascension, forming their Converts into regular Societies for this Purpose, ordaining *Elders* to preside and officiate, and prescribing a decent and orderly Behaviour. But you cannot imagine, that they would have acted in this Manner, had they not known it to be their blessed Master's Will, that a public Worship should subsist, even to the End of the World.

IF

---

\* Luke viii. 5.

IF it be asked, whether the first Christians had such decent and commodious Buildings to assemble in, as *this*, which is now opened and consecrated to the Worship of God? I answer, no—Nor yet did they assemble here and there promiscuously in Places of *common* Use. As the Patriarchs had their *Altars*, and the Children of *Israel* their *Tabernacle* or *Temple*; so may it be said, I think, upon good Authority, that the first Christians had their *particular Places*—some *House* or *Part* of a House, not the fittest perhaps for the Purpose, but the safest they could get; suited but too well, alas! to their low and persecuted State.

UPON the Increase of Christianity, Places for the public Profession of it increased too, as History informs us; and when it came under the Protection of the Civil Power, no Cost was spared to add to the Number, and contribute to the Decency of them. The same Spirit of Piety still continued; and while Kings founded *Cathedral Churches* for the general Good; others, who had large Estates, and were at too great a Distance from these Places of public Worship, thought fit to found *lesser Churches*, which became *Parochial*, for the Convenience of themselves and their Dependants

AND

AND here let me observe, in favour of this Day's Solemnity, that upon the Erection of such Edifices, it was the Custom, (and probably as early, as the Apostles Days,) to have them *publickly* devoted and set apart by the Bishop for divine Service. This was called the *Consecration* of the Church—not always performed in one and the same Manner, but always with such Solemnity, as served “ not only to  
 “ make it public, but also to surrender up to God  
 “ that Right, which otherwise it's Founder might  
 “ have in it, and to notify the holy and religious  
 “ Use, whereto it was intended to be put.” \*

IN after Ages indeed many useless, not to say ridiculous Ceremonies crept in; *but from the Beginning it was not so*. In those Times nothing was admitted, but what was pure and proper, and as *Eusebius* speaks, suitable to the Dignity of that great Being, to whom the Place was dedicated. And while we keep to this Primitive Pattern, no one can justly deem the *immediate* Occasion of our Meeting to be idle Pageantry, or deride it, as a superstitious Piece of Formality. Let him consider, how God was pleased to stile himself *the God of Bethel*, upon *Jacob* consecrating the Stone, whereon he slept, and naming it *Bethel, the House of God*,—  
 let

---

\* The Judicious Mr. Hooker's Words.



let him consider, how God *commanded* the Tabernacle to be consecrated;—what a signal Testimony too of his Approbation, he vouchsafed to give at the Dedication of the first Temple,—and how Christ honoured the Feast of the Dedication of the second with his Presence;—let him, I say, consider these Things, and he may perhaps allow it to be at least a decent Practice, if not highly expedient, upon entering into the House of God, to implore his Favour and gracious Acceptance of the Prayers, which shall at any Time there be offered. Especially, as the Service of our *Churches* is no Way inferior to the Service of the *Temple*; and too much Precaution can scarce be taken to imprint upon Men's Minds a reverential Regard to such Places, as have a *relative* Holiness, both in respect of God's *peculiar Right*, and *special Presence* in them. For tho' *the Earth is the Lord's, and the Fulness thereof*, and *no Place* is excluded from his Presence; yet that some Places are more peculiarly *his Property*, and more favoured with Indications of *his Presence* than others, is clear from Scripture. \*

BUT some perhaps may say, where is the Necessity of appropriating *any* Places for divine Worship, when it is foretold by *Malachi*, that *in every Place*  
*Incense*

---

\* Gen. xxviii. 16. Exod. xx. 24. Ps. lxxxvii. 2. Matt. xviii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 22.

*Incense should be offered unto the Lord*,—and again, required by *St. Paul*, that *Men pray every where*.—Nay, and when it is further urged, that the public Worship of God, the very End of erecting such Places, is but slightly spoken of in the Old Testament; and that “there is not one Command for “it in all the Gospel.” \*

Now in Answer to this Train of Objections, I would observe, *First*, That it was, neither the Prophet's, nor the Apostle's Intention to make *all* Places alike, equally Holy and fit for divine Service; but to shew, that this Service should be performed in *other* Places, as well as at *Jerusalem*. And *secondly*, tho' it must be acknowledg'd, that God speaks to his People with great Contempt, and even Detestation of their *Sabbaths and solemn Assemblies*; † yet as they are frequently reproached in Scripture for the Neglect of them, it could not be the Institution itself, but *their* Abuse and perverse Observance of it, which gave Offence. Accordingly they are required immediately after, as you may read, to put on a Holiness superior to that, which

C

they

---

\* These Words are *purposely* borrowed from the 1st. Chap. of Mr. Law's *serious Call*; but I must in Justice to that ingenious and pious Author observe, that his Design *there* was not to set aside all public Worship, as some *weak or prejudiced* Readers have suggested; but to prevent People laying too much Stress upon it, to the Neglect of the common Duties of *ordinary* Life.

† Isaiah i. 13. Amos v. 21.

they placed in outward Forms and Ceremonies, to amend their Lives, and answer the Spiritual End of the Institution.

As to the *last* Objection, tho' there is not one Command in all the Gospel for public Worship, (no more than for some other Duties, we are bound to) yet upon mature Thoughts, there appears sufficient Reason for our Lord's Silence on this Subject. For when he entered upon his *Prophetic* Office, the Worship of God was carried on in a publick Manner; but then the Persons, most eminent for their Attendance upon it, were utterly devoid of that *Humility* of Mind, that *Poverty* of Spirit, that *Contempt* of the World, in short, of that *Goodness* of the Heart, which is essential to *true* Christianity. The blessed Jesus therefore, who came not to make any *needless* Additions, but to supply *real* Defects, insists chiefly upon these much neglected Duties, leaving the Duty of public Worship, as he found it—strictly however, at the same Time, conforming to it in his own Person, and what was equal to a thousand Precepts, providing for the Continuance of it, by the Institution of a Church, which being an *outward visible Society*, could not, as *such*, subsist without it.

ADMIT then, that Christ did institute a Church; and you must of Necessity allow the Obligation to public  
lic



lic Worship,—unless you will say, that the Church of Christ is *wholly invisible*; whereof a Man may be a Member, shifting for himself, without associating with any *visible* Body of Christians. But this agrees not, as hath been clearly shewn by ingenious learned Men, either with the constant Notion of the Term *Church* in Scripture, or with the *Allusions*, whereby it is there described, or with the Account we have of its *first* Institution. And so sensible, let me add, was St. *Paul* of the Necessity of public Worship, that he joins it with the Duties of *Faith, Love, and good Works*, and would not allow his Converts to *forsake the assembling of themselves together*, even in Time of Persecution. \* He clearly foresaw, that were the Practice to become general, it would eventually destroy the Church; and so defeat Christ's gracious Design in founding it,—as the taking away one Stone after another from a Building, will in the End destroy the Building itself.

BUT this would be, not only ungrateful to your Redeemer, but injurious to your own Souls. For consider the Nature of our Church Service, and you cannot but be sensible, of what Advantage it must be to *all*, especially to the *Bulk* of Mankind, to have frequent Opportunities of hearing the Word of  
God

---

\* Heb. x. 25.

God *Authoritatively* read, explained, and inforced upon them. In what a full and eminent Manner likewise, do we honour God's Holy Name, acknowledge his Sovereignty, and display the Glory of his Kingdom, when we meet together, as his Subjects, and with joint Heart and Voice *praise him in the midst of the Congregation?* What too can be better calculated to promote a Spirit of Love, Peace, and good Will towards one another, than to appear in the Presence of God, as Children of the same Stock, Partakers of the same Redemption, and Suitors for the same Blessings? And *as oft as* we approach the Holy Table, which is the most solemn Part of religious Worship; what a Supply of Strength and Comfort must it impart to the *faithful* Communicant, to eat the *Bread of Life*, and drink the *Cup of Salvation*, in Communion with his Fellow-Christians?

BESIDES, the Prayers of the Church are singularly pleasing to our heavenly Father,—they ascend with a welcome Force, with an united, and consequently a richer *Odour* to Heaven, and from an express Promise have a superior Title to Success \*—and no Wonder, methinks, since they are prefer'd, not only in the *House of Prayer*, which is emphatically call'd *God's House*, the Place, where *his Honour*

---

\* Matt. xviii. 20.

*now dwelleth*, but in the most prevailing *Name* of Christ, with all the additional Life and Energy, which the Awfulness of the Place, the Importance of the Business, and the concurrent Zeal of a devout Congregation can possibly communicate; and are invigorated too, may I not add, by the Presence of the *Angels* themselves. \*

BUT as I am upon the Advantages of public Worship, I must not omit the salutary Effects, the kindly Influence, which it hath on *civil* Society. Not that the Happiness of *this*, is the principal End, for which we assemble; or that the Religion, we then outwardly profess, is merely a political Scheme, a worldly Convenience or Point of secular Interest—by no means.—*It is the Power of God unto Salvation*; designed not only to regulate this *present civil World*, but to *deliver*, or take us out of it. However, so long as we are in these Earthly Tabernacles, it is our Duty to consult the Good of the Community, whereof we are Members; and a *real* regard for it's Welfare is scarce consistent with a wilful and habitual Neglect of the stated returns of public Worship. For what *Seneca* says of Society in general, holds eminently true of *religious* Society—"Take this away, and you destroy that  
" Union of Mankind, upon which depends the  
" Happiness

---

\* Psa. cxxxviii. 1 Cor. xi. 10.



“Happiness of Life.” All Sense of Virtue would soon wear off; the World, bad as it is, grow worse, and run into the grossest Enormities. So far, we may observe, are they from being true Patriots, or Friends to the Community, who would set aside all public Worship.—Nay, they are the worst of Enemies, introducing a thousand real Evils, under the pretence of removing a single imaginary One. The *Jews* were well apprised of this Truth; and therefore as they reckoned religious Worship, one *Pillar* of the World, and that Man a *bad Neighbour*, who refused to join therein; so on the Reverse, they made it a Mark of the Centurion’s *Love to their Nation*, that he had *built them a Synagogue*. \*

THESE are the Advantages of public Worship—and certainly the bare mention of them must endear the Duty to every attentive Person. But the Misfortune is, that every one will not *attend*. Hence some, of an Infidel turn, shall despise it, as a needless and insignificant Thing. But what an Affront do they put upon the *Legislature*, which hath deem’d the public Worship of God, deserving of it’s Favour and Protection; and with what self-sufficiency do they oppose their own crude Sentiments to the Wisdom of all Nations? For how much soever different Nations have differed in the Mode and Object of their

---

\* Luke vii. 5.

their Worship, they *all* have agreed in a public One.

BUT we are not at a loss for the *true* Cause of their dislike to public Worship. It is well known, how [much Christianity was beholden to it in the first Ages of the Church: And while this is kept up, Infidelity hath one great Difficulty to struggle with. But were it once brought into Contempt; a Share of this Contempt would soon devolve upon the public Ministers; and from the public Ministers of Christ, to Christ himself the Transition is easy—for *he that despiseth you, says he, despiseth me,*\*

OTHERS again, under the plausible Shew of spiritualizing and refining our Holy Religion, throw off all regard to public Worship; and consequently, to the *outward* Means of Grace therewith connected; as too Carnal for the State of the Gospel. But while these aim at a more than *ordinary* Purity, they seem both to forget the *Nature* of Religion, and to neglect the *Way* to come at it. For granting, that the Religion of the Gospel is *that of the Heart, in the Spirit*; and that no Compliance with the *outward* Means of Grace can atone for the Want of it; yet he, that is willing to *give his Heart* to God, must give Proof of his Sincerity, by complying with

---

\* Luke x. 16.

with every divine Institution, which is intended to make him more Holy and more Spiritual. His very Compliance with an *outward* Ordinance is an act of *inward* Piety.

AND further, tho' God is not tied to *any* outward Means, but can shower down the most plentiful Effusions of his Grace, *when* and *in what Manner* he pleaseth; we are not to consider what the Almighty *can* do, but what he hath *promised* to do; and upon *what* Terms, we may expect the fulfilling of his Promise. And these being once appointed, we ought to receive them with all Thankfulness and Humility of Mind; as the properest Means to train us up to Virtue, and to promote the Religion of the Heart.

HOWEVER sincere then these Refiners of Christianity may be, they deceive themselves; and while they refuse to join in the Exercise of public Worship, for fear of placing *too much* Religion in outward Things, they are in Danger of having *too little*, or rather of losing *all*. Nor were the Question to be put, can they assign any one solid Reason, or even but the Shadow of one; why Man, who is confessedly made for Society, and perhaps is more distinguished by his *Devotion*, than by his *Reason*, may unite for every other End, but a *religious* one, which, by the Way, is the most interesting and important?



portant? Or why this innate Affection, this *moral Tendency* of the Soul towards it's own Species may not operate in Acts of *Worship*, as well as of *common Life*?

LASTLY, Others there are, who have no dislike to public Worship, but pretend to have little or no Leisure for it; and therefore they must leave it to Persons less engaged, and be content with *private Prayer*. Private Prayer indeed, as we are individual Persons, is a plain Duty—and as *every Man*, in his *single Capacity*, may be his own Priest, and *every Place*, his Temple; the less convenient it is for him to join in public Prayer, the more constant, one would hope, he is in private. But then, being a Member of Society, and of Christ's *mystic Body*, the Church, he is obliged, as *such*, to attend the public Worship.

As to the Pretence of having no leisure for this Duty, it is groundless. For should we allow some *Callings* in Life to leave us more at leisure for it, than others; yet none that is lawful, and none else is to be followed, doth *necessarily* exclude it. And to suppose this, were to arraign the Wisdom of God for binding his Creatures, as he hath done, to the Prosecution of their *secular*, as well as of their *spiritual* Concerns, and yet making them in-

compatible. Whereas they may be carried on in their proper Order; and what God *hath join'd together*, no good Man *will put asunder*; lest he weaken the Regard, which is due to *both*.

How *often* indeed any one should attend the public Worship, depends so much upon his *particular* Situation in Life, as not to admit a general Determination. But as the religious Observance of one Day in Seven, which is the *Lord's Day*, is strictly required of *all*—all must attend upon that Day; and as to the *intermediate* Days, let them be true to their own Consciences, and attend as they *have Opportunity*.

BUT let no Man think, that a *bare* Attendance is sufficient—or that all is well, if upon a *set Day* we *present ourselves before the Lord*.—No,—In the House of God we must behave, as the *Sons of God*, suitably to the Sacredness of the Place, and the Holy Design, for which we assemble. This is a necessary Expression of our Sincerity,—so necessary, that without it, we are mere Formalists; and we might *perhaps* as well not pray *at all*, as pray *irreverently*. We do not, 'tis true, hereby absolutely deny the *Being* of God; but we deny him to *be*, what he is;—we mock him, and presume upon his Connivance. But as no *dead*, nor even *blemished*

Thing

Thing might be offered under the Law; how can we expect that God will be pleased, under the improved State of the Gospel, with the *Sacrifice* of our Prayers, when it is blemished thro' our *irreverence*, and as it were, dead thro' our *Inattention*.

BUT be your Demeanour ever so devout and serious in the House of God, let me caution you against laying too much Stress even upon *this*;—not but that to offer our public Prayers *devoutly*, is right and good, adapted to our Nature, and the Relation we stand in to God and Man, and productive, as we have above observed, of many Advantages. But then if ye rest here, and do not consider this act of Worship, as a *Means* of growing better, as the *Scaffolding*, whereby ye are to rise towards Heaven, above the Poms and Vanities of this World; ye are *doubly* guilty in the Sight of God. Ye not only hinder his Worship from having *its perfect Work* in yourselves; but prejudice others against it, and occasion *your good to be evil spoken of*. For bad and unreasonable as the Argument is, bad Men will make Use of it to the Disadvantage of *all* public Worship, and conclude *that* to be good for nothing, which hath no better Effect on those, who practise it.



To these Cautions permit me to add one other, not more *seasonable*, than important, which is this—not to prefer the *Preaching* before the *Prayers* of the Church. This is a common Case, and with none more common, than with such, as are very Self-sufficient, and *in their own Conceit*, have least need of Instruction. But it is a Fault, and should be amended. For *Preaching*, tho' a divine Ordinance, and wisely instituted for the Edification of the Church; seems only to be, in order to our *praying*, and doing our Duty better for the future: And it is observable, that our Saviour calls his Father's House, the House of *Prayer*. So that they who have *itching Ears*, or an insatiable Thirst after Sermons, to the Disrelish of the Prayers, do virtually rob God of a principal Part of that Worship, which is due to him.

AND herein we, of the *established* Church, are of *all Men* the most inexcusable. For we are blest with a *Liturgy*, which is truly excellent, drawn up with admirable Piety and Prudence, in *our own* Language, and well *premeditated*. And if we are not led more by a Spirit of *Curiosity*, than of *Devotion*, we may, thro' the signal Advantages of this Liturgy, *worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness*. And by Way of Incitement, let us remember this saying of a great Divine of the last Century—" It

" is

“ is the Oratory of Prayer, poured out of our  
 “ Hearts shall save us, no less than the Oratory of  
 “ Preaching, poured in at our Ears. \*

I WOULD not be thought to insinuate, that a *Famine of the Word* would be no *Judgment* upon us, or to disparage so sacred and useful an Ordinance, as *Preaching*.—I mean only to inculcate a *true* and *proper* Esteem for it; which consists, not in depreciating the public Prayers, nor in *heaping up to yourselves Teachers after your own Lusts*, nor in *hearing the Word preached*, just as we do a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant Voice, and can play well on an Instrument; † but in *knowing them, which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord*, in *taking heed, how ye hear*, and conscientiously applying, *what ye hear*, to Practice. And here let me observe, if there be no secret Indisposition on your Parts, *no evil Heart of Unbelief*, ye may, it is to be hoped, improve under the Provision of the Church, however meanly some may think of it.

WHAT remains now, but to make an Application of what hath been offered; and that I may not

detain

---

\* Bishop Andrews.

† Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

detain you too long, it shall be as short, as possible.

SINCE then ye are happily provided with an *additional* Place for the Celebration of public Worship; and this Worship hath been frequented, as ye have heard, in all Ages of the World by the People of God, and is highly acceptable to him,—let me exhort you to a grateful Sense and due improvement of this Blessing, which ye enjoy. And I cannot but flatter myself with the Prospect of Success; as many Circumstances concur to inforce this Address, and render it effectual. Long have ye of this *antient* and *flourishing* Town been remarkably blest (and may ye still be blest) in your *Commercial* Transactions.—Ye have generously too contributed to the Erection of this Structure; and have ardently wished to *appear here before the Presence of the Lord*. Surely then ye cannot be guilty of such Ingratitude to a kind Providence, and of such bad Œconomy, and Inconsistency with yourselves, as to neglect the Means of Salvation, of which you are now possessed; or to give the least Occasion to have it said of our *Churches*, as it was of some *Victories* of old; that we know better, how to gain them, than to make the best Advantage of them.

NOTHING



NOTHING indeed is more common, than for inconsiderate Man to overlook what he enjoys. But I am *perswaded better Things of you*; and that it will be your Delight, as it is your Duty, to preserve and promote, as far as in you lieth, a strict Regard to this Place, and the solemn Use whereto it is dedicated.

LET not however your Regard be an *occasional* Thing only, nor your Religion confined to mere *Times* and *Places* of Prayer. Let a Vein of Devotion run thro' the whole of your Deportment, and be *Holy*, as St. Peter speaks, *in all Manner of Conversation*. \* Not always indeed upon your *Knees*, but always upon your *Guard*; ever studious to please your Maker, not only in what are called the *Offices* of Religion, but in all your *Actions*, in all the *Ways*, ye possibly can—walking in *Righteousness* with Man, as well as in *Holiness* with God, *all the Days of your Life*.

WITHOUT this religious State of Mind, this habitual Service, the Service of a Life *truly* and

*wholly*

---

\* 1 St. Peter i. 15.

*wholly devoted to God, ye may have a Name, that ye live, but ye are dead—* \* dead to all the Purposes of your Heavenly Calling, and *alienated from the Life of God.* Whereas if ye live under the Influence of the same Holy Spirit, wherewith ye pray; not *defiling this Sanctuary by the Iniquity of your Traffick;* † nor even *suffering your Hearts to go too far in the World;* ‡ but *purifying them thro' a lively, active Faith,* and bringing forth *Fruits meet for Repentance;* ye shall be as much distinguished by your *Piety,* as by your *Commerce;* and while the one yields the Riches of this World; the other will be a happy Means of procuring for you *Treasures in Heaven,* the more valuable Riches of Eternity.

BUT finally, as all ye can do, will be vain and fruitless without the divine Assistance; let me beseech you to call daily upon God; that he would vouchsafe to direct, guide, and strengthen you by his good Spirit. Then shall ye *be Vessels unto Honour, sanctified and meet for his Use, and prepared unto every good Work;* and having duly attended, and improved upon your Attendance in this Holy Place, this *House of God;* it shall be unto you the very *Gate of Heaven,* and lead you into a *House,*

not

---

\* Rev. iii. 1. † Ezek. xxviii. 18. ‡ 2 Esdras iv. 2.

*not made with Hands, whose Builder and Maker is,  
not Man, but God, and whither Christ our Fore-  
runner is gone before us.*

To this happy Place God of his infinite Mercy  
bring us all, thro' the Merits of Christ our Saviour;  
to whom with the Father and the blessed Spirit,  
be ascribed all Power, Praise, and Adoration, now  
and for ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.  
6 JU 65





not made with Hands, whose Builder and Maker is  
not Man, but God, and whose Glory and Force  
remain is gone before us.

To this happy Place God of his infinite Mercy  
bring us all, thro' the Merits of Christ our Saviour,  
to whom with the Father and the blessed Spirit,  
be ascribed all Power, Praise, and Adoration, now  
and for ever. Amen.

F. T. W. I. 2.

